

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSC-01 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 FEA-01

ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 EB-07

FPC-01 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01

PM-03 SAM-01 OES-03 SP-02 SS-15 STR-01 TRSE-00 FRB-03

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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9294

INFO DIA WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 0681

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, BM

SUBJECT: MORE CABINET SHIFTS: SIX DEPUTY MINISTERS NAMED

REF: RANGOON 670

1. PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY MARCH 15 APPROVED APPOINTMENT OF SIX DEPUTY MINISTERS WITHOUT, HOWEVER, IDENTIFYING TO WHICH MINISTRIES THEY ARE TO BE ASSIGNED. SIX OF THE SEVEN ARE ACTIVE DUTY OR RETIRED MILITARY OFFICERS. LIST FOLLOWS.

2. COL. KHIN OHN, CURRENTLY COMMANDER OF THE RANGOON COMMAND AND MILITARY ADMINISTRATOR OF THE CAPITAL. WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT HE WILL BE REPLACED BY COL. AYE KOE, COMMANDER OF THE NORTHWEST COMMAND AND A FORMER COLLEAGUE OF NE WIN IN THE BURMA RIFLES.

3. BRIGADIER KYAW HTIN, VICE CHIEF OF STAFF (ARMY). HE REPORTEDLY WILL BECOME DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER AND MAY RETAIN HIS VICE CHIEF OF STAFF POSITION. IF THIS IS THE CASE, IT WILL BE A RETURN TO THE EARLIER ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE IN WHICH THE DEPUTY MINISTER

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ALSO HELD THE VICE CHIEF OF STAFF POST AND WILL ENHANCE SOMEWHAT

KYAW HTIN'S POSITION.

4. COL. THAN TIN, COMMANDER OF THE CENTRAL COMMAND. THIS APPOINTMENT IS SOMEWHAT PUZZLING SINCE HIS COMMAND HAS BEEN QUITE SUCCESSFUL IN CLEARING UP THE REMNANTS OF THE OLD BCP FORCES IN THE PEGU YOMAS. TIMING IS IRONIC SINCE TODAY'S PRESS HEADLINES NEWS THAT CENTRAL COMMAND FORCES KILLED PEGU YOMAS BCP LEADERS THAKIN ZIN AND THAKIN CHIT IN SKIRMISH MARCH 15 (SEPTTEL). COL. THAN TIN IS SHOWN CONGRATULATING UNIT INVOLVED.

5. OTHERS NAMED DEPUTY MINISTERS ARE COL. HLA MAUNG, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF IMMIGRATION AND MANPOWER; EX-COL. OHN KYI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE PEOPLE'S POLICE FORCE; EX-COL. AUNG BWINT, CHAIRMAN OF THE BSPP COMMITTEE OF IRRAWADDY DIVISION. ONLY CIVILIAN NAMED IS DR. BO LAY, ONE TIME SECRETARY OF THE MINISTRY OF COOPERATIVES AND SECRETARY OF FINANCE AND PLANNING FOR THE BSPP. ANOTHER POSSIBLE CABINET SHIFT BEING RUMORED IS THAT OF COL. TIN SHWE, DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE, TO THE NEW POSITION OF SECOND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER.

6. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NOMINATIONS DOES NOT STATE WHETHER THE NEW DEPUTY MINISTERS WILL RETAIN THEIR MILITARY RANKS; COL. KHIN OHN, HOWEVER, TOLD DATT THAT HE IS "LEAVING THE ARMY".

7. PER REFTTEL, GUB HAS NOW ANNOUNCED THAT MAUNG MAUNG KHA HAS ASSUMED POSITION OF MINISTER OF MINES, COL. MAUNG CHO MINISTER OF INDUSTRY NO. 2 AND U HLA AYE AS MINISTER OF INDUSTRY NO. 1. WE ARE STILL NOT CLEAR ON WHICH INDUSTRY MINISTER HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT SINCE GUB HAS NOT SEEN FIT TO IDENTIFY WHICH WILL DEAL WITH HEAVY INDUSTRY AND WHICH WILL HANDLE ENERGY MATTERS.

8. EMBASSY ASSESSMENT FOLLOWING.
OSBORN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, MILITARY PERSONNEL, REORGANIZATIONS, PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975RANGOO00681
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750092-0560
From: RANGOON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750344/aaaabnhv.tel
Line Count: 94
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 RANGOON 670
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 JUL 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <13 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MORE CABINET SHIFTS: SIX DEPUTY MINISTERS NAMED
TAGS: PINT, BM, (KHIN OHN), (KYAW HTIN), (THAN TIN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006